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Address by His Majesty King Abdullah II at the Plenary Session of the 80th General Assembly of the United Nations

23 September 2025

In the Name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful
Madam President,
Mr. Secretary General,
Your Excellencies:

Another year, another UN General Assembly, and another occasion when I stand before you to address the same issue: the conflict in the Middle East.

And not for the first time, developments on the ground have made me question the worth and utility of words ... in capturing the magnitude of the crisis. Yet, not speaking about it, would signal acceptance of the situation and abandonment of our humanity — and that, I will not do.

Our UN General Assembly was born 80 years ago, pledging to learn from — not repeat — history.

The world vowed: Never again.

However, for almost as long, Palestinians have been living through a cruel cycle of 'yet again'.

Bombed indiscriminately... yet again.

Killed, injured, and maimed... yet again.

Displaced and dispossessed ...yet again.

Denied rights, dignity... their basic humanity... Yet. Again.

So, I must ask... how long?

How long will it be before we find a resolution to this conflict — one that safeguards the rights of all sides, and allows a level of normalcy in the lives of the families at its core?

How long will it be before I stand before you and speak... not of suffering and devastation in my region... but of prospect, prosperity and potential?

Sadly, this is not the only conflict in our world—and some may say that other wars are also devastating. But the Palestinian-Israeli conflict remains unique:

- It is the longest-standing conflict in the world. ...
- ... An illegal occupation of a helpless population by a self-declared 'democratic nation'. ...
- ... And a flagrant violation of repeated UN resolutions, international law, and human rights conventions — a failure that should have elicited outrage and action, especially from major democracies ... instead, it has been met with decades of inertia.

Furthermore, the current Israeli government's provocative calls for a so-called 'Greater Israel' can only be realised through the blatant violation of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of its neighbours — and there's nothing great about that. I can't help but wonder ... if a similar outrageous call were made by an Arab leader ... would it be met with the same global apathy?

The international community must stop entertaining the illusion that this government is a willing partner for peace.

Far from it... its actions on the ground are dismantling the very foundations on which peace could stand, and intentionally burying the very idea of a Palestinian State.

It has shown how little it respects the sovereignty of other countries... as we have seen in its flagrant violations in Lebanon, Iran, Syria, Tunisia, and most recently... Qatar!

And its hostile rhetoric calling for the targeting of Al Aqsa Mosque will incite a religious war that would reach far beyond the region and lead to an all-out clash that no nation would be able to escape.

How long before we hold all nations to the same standards?

How long before we recognise the Palestinians as people who aspire to the same things you and I do — and we act on that recognition?

How long before we recognise that statehood is not something Palestinians need to earn? It is not a reward — it is an indisputable right.

In Jordan, we are determined to work for a world in which people are secure in their homes, are safe to practice their faiths, and are able to live and thrive in dignity.

As Custodians of Muslim and Christian holy sites in Jerusalem, we safeguard these holy places against actions that violate the city's legal and historical status quo.

Compromising the delicate balance in the Holy City will turn it into a tinderbox that ignites global conflict.

And Jordan is serving as the main base for the international humanitarian response in Gaza ... working by all possible means to provide critical supplies of aid and food. We appreciate our regional and international partners. I am also immensely proud of the many Jordanians — including men and women of the Jordan Armed Forces — who are at the heart of this effort: Ground convoys, aircraft crews, doctors, nurses, and mobile medical staff — who work, even under fire, to provide relief.

My friends,

The war in Gaza marks one of the darkest moments in this institution's history.

But although it is today's horror, the injustice stretches back decades.

The Palestinian-Israeli conflict has been on the UN agenda throughout its eight decades of existence.

How long will we be satisfied with condemnation after condemnation without concrete action?

When it comes to the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, it seems that what unfolds in the halls of power is theory; the struggles and suffering on the ground is reality.

For decades, we've seen several attempts to achieve a solution via interim agreements and temporary stopgaps … none that delivered on the end game. In fact, many would argue these processes served as a distraction… as Israel grabbed more land, expanded illegal settlements, demolished homes, and displaced entire neighbourhoods. Muslim and Christian holy sites in Jerusalem have been vandalised and desecrated by those under government protection.

And throughout all these years, Israeli families, too, have not been able to live in true security. Because military action cannot bring them the safety they need.

No where is that more evident than in Gaza. More than [60] thousand Palestinians killed; … [50] thousand children injured or killed… Miles of burnt-out rubble. Neighbourhoods, hospitals, schools, farms, even mosques and churches, in ruins. Widespread starvation.

And what we are seeing is only a glimpse. Because never in our modern history… has the lens of international media been obstructed like this, from capturing the reality on the ground.

Almost two years in, and the cruelty of this military campaign continues unabated.

These, and countless others, carry forward Jordan's deep heritage of compassion and generosity to people in grave need.

My Friends,

Amid such darkness, there is a glimmer on the horizon.

We are seeing more nations stepping up on behalf of a permanent ceasefire in Gaza—one that ensures the release of all hostages, unhindered humanitarian aid, and support for the Palestinian people as they rebuild.

We all know that force is no foundation for security; it is a prelude for greater violence. Repeated wars are teaching generations of Israelis and Palestinians that their only recourse… is the gun.

Security will only come when Palestine and Israel begin to co-exist side by side.

This is the two-state solution, in line with international law and UN resolutions: an independent and viable Palestinian state, with East Jerusalem as its capital, … alongside a secure Israel, … living in peace with its neighbours.

For almost a quarter-century, this has been the promise of the Arab Peace Initiative—in which Arab and Muslim partners around the globe extended their hand.

My friends,

For the past two years, we have finally seen the world's conscience stirring… in the courage of ordinary people from every walk of life, and every corner of the globe… raising their voices as one, and declaring it has been too long.

This United Nations must echo that call: It has been too long.

And it must act on that call… until peace is a reality.

Thank you.

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